

420-422 North Washington Street (Houses)
Baltimore (Independent City)
Maryland

HABS No. MD-905

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
MID-ATLANTIC REGION NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19106

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

420-422 NORTH WASHINGTON
STREET (HOUSES)

HABS No. MD-905

Location: 420-422 North Washington Street, Baltimore (Independent City), Maryland

Present Owner: Mayor and City Council of Baltimore

Present Occupant: Vacant

Present Use: Former use residential

Significance: The two buildings at 420-422 North Washington Street are significant as contributing elements to the Butcher's Hill/East Baltimore area which has been determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Despite alterations, the upper floors of the buildings retain characteristic traditional Baltimore rowhouse architectural design. The traditional rowhouse featured flush, red brick facades with ornamentation used only (if at all) to accent doors, windows and rooflines. The buildings, modillioned cornice is a common feature in the area, as is the bracketed cornice.

Part I. Historical Information

A. Physical History

1. Date of erection: c. 1876 for 420-422 North Washington Street according to land records and the 1877 Hopkins Atlas of Baltimore City and environs.
2. Builder: William E. Holland
3. Original and subsequent owners: The properties were originally owned by Helena Weisbrod, a widow, who lived with her son Phillip, a cigar maker. After 1901, the properties changed hands several times and they were used for a variety of commercial establishments and were rented out for apartments.
4. Alterations and additions: 420-422 North Washington Street have been altered with brick infilling of windows and the installation of a garage door on the first floor front facade. The southern side wall of the group is partially constructed of concrete block, the same material as a large rear addition.

B. Historical Context

The buildings at 420-422 North Washington Street are consistent in date and style with other buildings in the National Register eligible area, despite alterations. The size of the structures -- three stories -- indicates that they were the homes of middle class families. Smaller two story houses, often on alley streets, were located in the same neighborhood and were occupied by the working class and the poor.

Part II. Architectural Information

A. General Statement

1. Architectural character: 420-422 North Washington Street are typical of traditional Baltimore rowhouses despite a great deal of alteration.
2. Condition of fabric: The structural condition of the buildings is generally good, however they have been altered to a great degree.

- B. Description of exterior: 420-422 North Washington Street were originally part of a larger rowhouse grouping, but are now all that remains of this once residential block. Each building is three stories high and two bays wide, constructed of brick. Both buildings have been altered for commercial use. A garage door protected by a metal awning has been installed at 420 North

Washington Street. The window and door on the first floor of the adjoining building, 422 North Washington Street have been bricked over. The second floor windows are vinyl-clad, one-over-one windows with wood sills and segmentally arched double header brick lintels. A wood modillion cornice completes the front facade. The north side of the building has been stuccoed. The south side of the building reveals a brick partition wall and concrete block construction that is part of a later addition to the building. This addition extends the structure back to Chapel Street.

- C. Description of interior: The interior was not accessible. It is however believed that the interior has been substantially altered, and there are no important interior architectural elements.
- D. Site: The buildings are located on a strict grid street pattern. They have been built up against the building line of the lot directly on a sidewalk. There are no notable landscape features.

Part III Sources of Information

- A. Original architectural drawings: none.
- B. Early views: none known.
- C. Interviews: not conducted.
- D. Bibliography:
 - Baltimore City Land Records.
 - Baltimore City Directories.
- E. Likely sources not yet investigated: census field book information 1880, 1900, 1910; oral histories.

Part IV. Project Information

The demolition of 420-422 North Washington Street is to be funded by an Urban Development Action Grant. Under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, mitigative documentation was undertaken in July 1983 by Fred B. Shoken, research analyst for the Baltimore Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation.